

OUR GENEROUS GIVING CAMPAIGN

So if you have been to a service in one of our churches in the last couple of weeks, you may have gathered that at the moment we are focussing on **Living Generously**. This has sprung from us doing some hard thinking about our finances. People tend to think that the church is a very wealthy institution, but sadly, unless you are looking at money that is tied up in property, this is not the case. Each Parish is responsible for raising enough money to keep the church building in good repair, pay all the associated bills, pay for its clergy and finance any work that it undertakes. With small congregations that is a tall order.

The churches in the Shelswell Benefice offer a Christian presence at the heart of our communities: through our wonderful buildings, by worshipping together, by serving our communities and by sharing our faith and values. For our churches to survive and grow, we rely on regular donations so that we can plan confidently for the future.

We owe a huge thank you to all of you who already give to our churches, whether you give money, or time and energy to mowing, cleaning, fundraising events, or serving on a committee or your skills to flower arranging or playing the organ, or whatever. Without you, we would not be able to function!

But we would like to get our parishes on a firmer financial footing. So we are adopting something called the Parish Giving Scheme. Most of the parishes are initially rolling this out to churchgoers and to people who are already regular givers. But we also hope that others from our villages will also want to get behind the scheme and give some financial support to help us continue to play an active part in our communities.

If you would like to find out more, please contact the Parish Giving lead in your village:

Finmere: Peter Lepper 01280 848358 or
Charley Grimston 01280 848364

Hethe: Flora Skinner 01869277366

Mixbury: Alec Howard 01280 848295

Newton Purcell: Ann von Maltzahn 01280 848680

Stoke Lyne: James Holden White 01869 345211

Stratton Audley and Godington: Tony Fox 01869
278584

or the PCC Treasurer:

Cottisford and Hardwick: David Barnes 01869
277690

Fringford: Christina McCullough 01869 277576

WHAT IS THE PARISH GIVING SCHEME?

- a means of supporting your local church by giving monthly, quarterly or annual by direct debit.
- initially developed by the Diocese of Gloucester, it is now run by a charitable company. It is tried and tested – almost half the Dioceses in the country have now adopted it.
- joining the scheme is easy. There is a simple form to complete. The company will then collect your giving from your bank and then transfer it to the PCC account of your local church, together with any gift aid that is due, ten days later.
- It does not cost you or us a penny to join, but it will help Treasurers greatly — gift aid is automatically sorted out for us, and regular giving means that the money coming into the church is much more predictable.
- if you are willing, your donation can go up by inflation annually - although you will always be told a couple of months before the increase that it is to take place and can opt out at any time. This helps your church to tackle the problem of static giving - £20 given in 2000 depreciated in value to £13.95 in 2014.
- should your circumstance change, a simple phone call can change or cancel your direct debit at any time.
- you can give anonymously if you wish
- you can give as little as £1 a month – or as much as £1500! But every little helps us.

SO WHAT ARE WE DOING? WHAT DIFFERENCE DO WE MAKE?

WORK WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – LITTLE LAMBS TODDLER GROUP, monthly Bible story, singing and craft in Fringford preschool, Shelswell Family Service, Children's Holiday Week and the Good Friday Workshop

LINKS WITH FINMERE AND FRINGFORD SCHOOLS: Funday School – our monthly Christian after school club, weekly vicar led assemblies, school governors, schultute for new starters, tea and cake after school services in church

SHELSWELL BY THE SEA – our holiday at home scheme, mainly but not exclusively for older adults, Pic-a-flic

MARKING THOSE IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN LIFE: Christenings, Weddings, Funerals

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER: fetes, festivals, coffee mornings, concerts Plough Sunday Service, Pentecost Service in Evenley Woods, Men's breakfast, involvement in the Shelswell History Festival, Stoke Lyne Games Afternoon

LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS: Joining with Holy Trinity for regular coffee mornings and for the Week of Christian Unity, working with Stratton Audley Parish Council, WI Carol Service

PROVIDING SPACE FOR REFLECTION: as well as during our regular services, there are the FOOD FOR THOUGHT TALKS at Stoke Lyne, quiet space in our beautiful churches and churchyards, meditation group during Lent

SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN CUIEBET, SOUTH SUDAN: enabling them to buy food during last year's food crisis, raising money for ox ploughs

THE SHELSWELL NEWS: keeping you abreast of local happenings and putting you in touch with local businesses

MARKING IMPORTANT TIMES OF YEAR: Christmas, Easter, harvest

MAINTAINING OUR WONDERFUL HISTORIC BUILDINGS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

PROVIDE COMMUNITY SPACES IN SOME OF OUR VILLAGES

and, of course, week by week maintaining a worshipping and prayerful presence in our communities!

AND IF WE HAD MORE MONEY, WE WOULD LOVE TO:

- **EXTEND OUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WORK**
- **BUY A SHARE IN A YOUTH WORKER, RESURRECT THE YOUTH CLUB, GIVE SPACE FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO GROW SPIRITUALLY**
- **GIVE MORE SUPPORT TO FRAIL AND ELDERLY FOLK LIVING IN THE BENFICE**

